

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 135057
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TAGS: PORG, SHUM, UNESCO

SUBJECT: UNESCO: 104TH EXBD: RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN
INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: PARIS 16712

1. DEPT GENERALLY WELCOMES THE UNDERLYING IDEA OF THE
DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY AMB. BUSTAMANTE, WHICH
EMPHASIZES THE KEY IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHING OF HUMAN
RIGHTS. THE TWO RESOLUTIONS CITED IN OPERATIVE PARA 2
WERE BOTH SUPPORTED BY U.S. DELEGATIONS TO THE 33RD HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION AND THE 32ND UNGA.

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PAGE 02 STATE 135057

2. UNFORTUNATELY, DEPT HAS STRONG DOUBTS ABOUT OPERATIVE
PARA 5 AND THE PROPOSAL TO DESIGNATE 1980 AS THE INTERNA-
TIONAL YEAR FOR THE TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS. OUR DOUBTS
ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL REST ON THREE GROUNDS:

(A) THE SUBJECT OF THE TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS ONLY

A PART OF THE BIGGER PROBLEM OF THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE AND IS TOO LIMITED FOR DESIGNATION AS THE THEME OF AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR;

(B) OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE PROLIFERATION OF INTERNATIONAL YEARS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM; AND

(C) ECOSOC RESOLUTION 1800 (LV) ADOPTED ON AUGUST 7, 1973 INVITES THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO REPORT TO ECOSOC WHENEVER THEY PROPOSE TO DESIGNATE AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR. THE IDEA IS TO ENABLE THE COUNCIL TO COMMENT ON THE PURPOSE AND TIMING OF PROPOSED "YEARS" PRIOR TO FINAL DECISIONS BEING TAKEN ON THEIR DESIGNATION. UNESCO HAS FOLLOWED THIS PROCEDURE IN THE PAST (UNESCO PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT), BUT THIS PANAMANIAN DRAFT RESOLUTION IGNORES THE ECOSOC BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE UNGA.

3. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED THE VIEW THAT HOLDING TOO MANY INTERNATIONAL YEARS BLUNTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THOSE THAT ARE TRULY SPECIAL. THREE ECOSOC RESOLUTIONS OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS (RES. 1368 (XLV), RES. 1800 (LV), AND RES. 2098 (LXIII)) ALSO EMBODY THE PROPOSITION THAT INTERNATIONAL YEARS BE LIMITED TO BETTER FOCUS ATTENTION AND SECURE ACTION ON NEGLECTED BUT IMPORTANT ISSUES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 135057

RES. 1800 (LV) ALSO INVITES THE POLICY-MAKING ORGANS OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF CONVERTING PROPOSED "YEARS" INTO CELEBRATIONS OF SHORTER DURATION. FYI: DEPT HAS RECENTLY RESPONDED NEGATIVELY TO A PROPOSAL MADE TO US BY LIBERIA THAT 1980 BE DESIGNATED AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS YEAR. END FYI.

4. USDEL SHOULD EXPLAIN TO AMB. BUSTAMANTE OUR DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR AND SUGGEST TO HIM THAT, IN LINE WITH OUR CONCERNS, HE CONSIDER MODIFYING PARA 5 OF HIS DRAFT TO SIMPLY CALL UPON THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNESCO IN COOPERATION WITH THE UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO STRENGTHEN UNESCO'S ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF TEACHING HUMAN RIGHTS IN PLACE OF DESIGNATING 1980 AS AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. IF BUSTAMANTE DECLINES SUGGESTION CONTAINED IN PARA 4 ABOVE AND INSISTS ON SOME SORT OF "INTERNATIONAL EVENT" TO GIVE IMPETUS TO THE TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS, USDEL MAY SUGGEST AS A FALLBACK THAT RESOLUTION RECOMMEND A SHORTER PERIOD (E.G., A SPECIFIC WEEK IN 1980) FOR

CELEBRATING TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. IF AMB. BUSTAMANTE AGREES TO ALTER OPERATIVE PARA 5
OF HIS DRAFT RES. AS WE LIKE, USDEL IS AUTHORIZED TO JOIN
AS CO-SPONSOR. VANCE

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